



BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 128

**EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR AT-RISK FOUR-YEAR-OLDS
TO ACHIEVE ACADEMIC SUCCESS THROUGH NORTH CAROLINA'S
PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten Program (hereafter "NC Pre-K"), formerly known as More at Four, is widely acknowledged to be one of the finest and most successful pre-kindergarten programs in America; and

WHEREAS, without the opportunity for appropriate development in the early years, children are in danger of falling behind their peers and remaining at a disadvantage throughout their educational careers; and

WHEREAS, studies have repeatedly shown that at-risk children who participate in NC Pre-K are better prepared to succeed in school and that these benefits are maintained for years thereafter; and

WHEREAS, all other children in the classroom also benefit from the success of at-risk children because teachers have more time to devote to helping all children learn; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that through early childhood education, states save millions of dollars that would otherwise be spent on early grade retention, special education, remedial programs, drop-out prevention, and a myriad of other costs; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of North Carolina has expressly recognized the constitutional right of all children in North Carolina to have the opportunity to obtain a sound basic education; and

WHEREAS, on August 21, 2012, the North Carolina Court of Appeals issued a decision in the case captioned *Hoke County Board of Education, et al v. State of North Carolina*, affirming an order from the North Carolina Superior Court mandating "the unrestricted acceptance of all 'at-risk' four-year-old prospective enrollees who seek to enroll in existing pre-kindergarten programs in his or her respective county"; and